

Remarks

Claims 1, 7, 12 and 17 have been amended. No claims have been cancelled or added. Therefore, claims 1-17 and 19-22 are presented for examination.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Rejection

Claims 1-17 and 19-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Michels et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,161,144). Applicants submit that the present claims are patentable over Michels.

Michels discloses a switching device for forwarding network traffic to a desired destination on a network. The switching device includes multiple ports and uses a lookup table to determine which port to forward network traffic over. (Abstract). Michels further discloses that the switching device includes multiple search engines that can perform multiple binary searches simultaneously. (Col. 2, ll. 60-63). The search engines can send network frames in any desired format and a media interface reformats the frames for the network. (Col. 4, ll. 59-60). Michels further discloses a management processor that maintains a lookup table in memory. The management processor directs the search engines to delete old table entries, insert new entries and maintain the table in sorted order. (Col. 5, ll. 31-36).

Claim 1 recites:

An apparatus comprising:
a parser to receive a packet and to generate a packet search request;
a plurality of search resources, each search resource to determine a search response based on the packet search request;
a switch to receive the packet search request from the parser and to multicast the packet search request to the plurality of search resources; and

a session memory coupled to the switch to enable the switch to be session aware, wherein session aware allows a session to be maintained across multiple packets.

Applicants submit that Michels fails to disclose or suggest a session memory coupled to the switch to enable the switch to be session aware, wherein session aware allows a session to be maintained across multiple packets. First, the Examiner asserts that a session memory that allows a session to be maintained across multiple packets, is not novel or unique and that any memory device can be configured to help forward network frames. (See Final Office Action, mailed January 10, 2006 at page 4, point 4). Applicants respectfully disagree that a switch that is session aware is not novel. Specifically, the Specification recites that “access to a session/state memory so that the router can be session aware is not possible with conventional routers.” (Specification at page 2, lines 7-8). Therefore, a session memory that allows a switch to be session aware is a novel improvement on previous switching technology. In addition, applicants respectfully submit that helping forward network frames is not equivalent to maintaining a session across multiple packets.

Second, applicants are unable to find any disclosure or suggestion in Michels of a session memory coupled to the switch to enable the switch to be session aware, wherein session aware allows a session to be maintained across multiple packets. Michels discloses a management processor that maintains a lookup table in memory. (Col. 5, ll. 31-33). However, Michels does not disclose a session memory coupled to the switch to enable the switch to be session aware, wherein session aware allows a session to be maintained across multiple packets. A simple storage device with a lookup table, as

asserted by the Examiner, would not allow a session to be maintained across multiple packets, as recited by claim 1. Consequently, the Examiner has failed to cite a reference that discloses or suggests a session storage device coupled to the switch to enable the switch to allow a session to be maintained across multiple packets. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over Michels.

Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1 and include additional features. Therefore, claims 2-6 are also patentable over Michels.

Independent claims 7, 12 and 17 also recite, in part, a session memory coupled to the switch to enable the switch to be session aware, wherein session aware allows a session to be maintained across multiple packets. As discussed above, Michels does not disclose or suggest such a feature. Therefore, claims 7, 12 and 17 are also patentable over Michels for the reasons stated above with respect to claim 1. Claims 8-11 depend from claim 7, claims 13-16 depend from claim 12, and claims 19-22 depend from claim 17. As dependent claims necessarily include the features of their independent claims, claims 8-11, 13-16 and 19-22 are also patentable over Michels.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections have been overcome and that the claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request the rejections be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at (303) 740-1980 if there remains any issue with allowance of the case.

Applicants respectfully petition for an extension of time to respond to the outstanding Office Action pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) should one be necessary. Please charge our Deposit Account No. 02-2666 to cover the necessary fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(a) for such an extension.

Please charge any shortage to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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